



## **Stay Interviews, a Practice for Retention**

Hiring and retaining quality employees is a very important role that District Leaders must fulfill. Many leaders are having difficulty getting qualified candidates to apply and accept open positions. Currently, some districts are providing services with a staffing deficit. Many have vacancies for months and struggle to get an adequate applicant pool of qualified candidates. For years, management and human resources have facilitated “exit interviews” when an employee resigns to solicit input on why they left and what would have kept them from leaving especially for productive employees. They may ask questions such as the following:

- Why are you leaving this position?
- How do you feel about management and leadership?
- Did you receive adequate training, resources, and support to be successful?
- Was there a time when you felt proud of your work and accomplishments?
- Do you think the company supported your career goals and development?
- Would you recommend this company to others seeking jobs?
- What were you looking for in a new position?
- What would need to change for you to consider staying?

At this point in the process, the company has already lost a good employee. Hopefully the information received can help to improve practices, protocol, and/or culture to retain other good employees.

“Stay” interviews, historically were facilitated as a last-ditch effort to try to get productive employees to rescind their resignation. Recently, some employers are taking a more proactive approach by facilitating stay interviews as a retention tool before the employee resigns. These are facilitated a couple of times per year and ask similar questions as the exit interview while the employee is still employed. Below are some examples of stay interview questions.

- What do you look forward to each workday?
- What do you like most—or least—about working here?
- What keeps you working here?
- If you could change something about your job, what would it be?
- What would make your job more satisfying?
- How do you like to be recognized?
- What talents are not being used in your current role?
- What would you like to learn here?
- What motivates—or demotivates—you?

- What can I do to best support you?
- What can I do more—or less—of as your manager?

*Source: SHRM sample HR form.*

This pro-active approach of facilitating stay interviews as a part of the performance management is a great practice to try to retain productive employees. It also assists leaders in building rapport and trust with employees.